

The Sequel

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A Hollywood director gets a chance to direct a movie with a winning formula. Should be easy, shouldn't it?

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The Contract

Mexican American director Julio Cesar signed on the dotted line for the contract to the Sequel of the Blockbuster Hollywood movie series 'Galactic Monsters From Outer Space'. There had been ten movies in the original franchise. They had been the highest grossing movies of all time twenty years ago and every director in Hollywood wanted the job but Julio had been given it. Even now twenty years later since the last movie was released people still loved to dress up as Galactic Monsters and the toys and comic books made millions.

Tomorrow everyone in the world would know that Julio would be the one to write and direct the sequel to Galactic Monsters.

He had waited for this moment his entire life.

He was overwhelmed.

He placed the contract in the envelope and said a silent prayer.

Then the courier arrived and took the contract worth millions of dollars and sent it to the studio heads who had placed all their faith in him.

"You look nervous," said his wife Isabella.

"I'm fine," said Julio as the courier drove away.

He got a queasy feeling in his stomach.

"Are you nervous because the last movie was a flop honey?" she inquired.

Julio raised his eyes. "It wasn't a flop," he replied defensively.

A tighter knot formed in his stomach.

Everyone had hated it.

"It made the money, that's all that matters," he said.

"Of course honey, I understand," she said.

"Come on, let's have a drink to celebrate," said Julio.

They poured some tequila and knocked it back.

Julio wiped his mouth.

"I know when you are nervous," she said. "If it's a great big flop it doesn't matter. It's only Space Monsters!"

Sweat began to form on Julio's brow.

IT'S ONLY SPACE MONSTERS echoed in his mind.

"Back in a minute," said Julio.

He walked into his marble bathroom, closed the door and then leaned over the toilet bowl. He

immediately threw up.

"Are you ok honey?" asked Isabella.

"Yeah, I'm fine," said Julio and he wiped his mouth clean.

He flushed the toilet and sat on the seat.

He was shaking a little with joy and complete fear.

"It won't be a great big flop honey! I believe in you!!" she said as she stood beside the door.

Julio wiped his sweaty hands off his eyes. A pressure headache was forming.

"Are you making fun of me again?" asked Julio. She had a strange sense of humour.

However, Isabella did not reply.

"I'm going shopping," said Isabella.

Julio sat on the toilet seat as he heard the front door click shut.

The nausea returned.

Phil

Julio sat in his home in the LA Valley working on his new Galactic Monsters script.

He re-read the first draft and stared out the window of his study at his swimming pool, gathering his thoughts.

Outside he saw unexpected movement and slid open the door.

In the shadows someone was hiding in his back garden.

"Hello?" he asked a little nervously. "Can I help you?"

Julio wondered if it was a Galactic Monsters fan, and held onto his cell phone ready to call 911.

However a familiar man in his sixties appeared who was hiding behind his tree.

"Phil?" said Julio sounding surprised and perplexed.

Phil McCool was the original creator of Galactic Monsters and had made over a billion dollars on the franchise. Five years before he had sold out his stake in Galactic Monsters but was still the recognizable face of the franchise.

Sheepishly Phil waved at Julio.

"Hey Julio, I was in the neighbourhood and I thought I'd drop by."

"You're in my back garden," said Julio.

"The gate was open and you didn't answer my call," replied Phil.

"I'm working on the script so I can't have any distractions," said Julio.

"Amazing," said Phil, smiling in his cool way.

"What?" wondered Julio.

"That is exactly what I did when I worked on the last ten movies. I needed intense privacy to keep the creative juices flowing."

Julio didn't know what to say.

"How is the script going?" wondered Phil.

"Good," said Julio defensively.

"Look," said Phil. He walked over to Julio. "I have some ideas for the new movie and I'd like to share them with you."

However Julio shook his head. "No Phil, you can't do that. This is my movie now. I am the one who will write it."

"Just a few pointers," said Phil.

"No, I'd have to give you writing credits. People would say that I stole your ideas," said Julio.

"We're just kicking around a few ideas that's all. Anyway in the valley everyone borrows good ideas, right? The Greeks already had it all figured out two thousand years ago." Phil took out some sticky notepads and placed them on his window.

"Here are some key scenes that will guarantee the success of your movie," added Phil. He gathered his script writing ideas together. "You need to bring back the Jelly Fish and have them destroy Oyster Heaven again where Monster Lord is hiding out."

Julio looked at his phone wanting to call 911 but knew that it would be all over Social Media if he did.

By the time Phil was finished there were over fifty post-its on his window in neat story-lines.

"I had a dream about Galactic Monsters 11 Last Night. If you make this one it'll be a smash hit." He paused meaningfully. "Like the other ten I made."

Phil looked at Julio who could feel his stress levels rising again.

"I can't use it Phil, it's got to be my movie," replied Julio.

Phil looked hurt. "Sure, I understand," he said.

"I can just leave them there on your window in case you are looking for inspiration," insisted Phil.

Julio rubbed his forehead and then his eyes.

Isabella arrive in the study wondering who her husband was talking to.

"Oh hey Phil!" said Isabella. "I didn't hear you come in." She smiled at the world famous much loved billionaire and gave him a hug.

She looked at the window.

"What are these?" asked Isabella.

"Nothing," said Julio and he exhaled loudly.

Where's Phil?

In a quiet restaurant, Julio gathered the original cast members together.

They sat opposite him looking at him suspiciously.

"Where's Phil?" asked Brett who was the star of the original movies.

"He's not here," said Julio patiently. "I'm running this movie."

However, Brett just looked around him and called out.

"PHIL?"

Brett then looked under the table.

"Phil are you there?"

Julio shook his head and drew out a long sigh. "He's not under the table."

But Brett looked annoyed. "Phil said he'd be here. That's the only reason I turned up."

Julio met eyes with Brett who was unimpressed.

"Look there he is," said Melanie. "He's at the table in the corner."

They all got up and left the table to sit with Phil.

Reluctantly Julio moved table and sat with Phil.

"You didn't tell me you'd be here," said Julio.

"Just think of me as continuity," said Phil.

Brett hugged Phil like he was a long lost friend almost crying. "I missed you so much!"

"So what's your vision for the movie?" asked Ryan who was the famous sidekick of Brett providing comic relief.

"I want to re-imagine the universe," said Julio.

"And I want you to re-imagine my bank balance," said Ryan smiling.

The original cast and crew all burst out laughing.

"I want to make one thing clear," said Brett. "We are making Space Monsters not Beagles in Space. These are two COMPLETELY different types of movies!"

"I understand," said Julio who had been given the franchise on how well he had rebooted Beagles.

"All my life I've lived Space Monsters." Tears almost filled his eyes as he spoke.

The original cast and crew just laughed at Julio like it was a joke.

"Look kid," said Ryan looking at Julio. "Just pay us what we're owed and don't screw this up,"

Julio's shoulders dropped and the original cast and crew toasted the new movie knocking back the booze.

Julio ordered a mineral water.

Noobs

In another restaurant Julio gathered together the new cast members for his new movie.

"You've all been selected for the movie!" he said.

They all jumped up and down with joy and then Katie who would be the female lead wrapped her arms around Julio.

"I am so happy," she said.

"I am so so happy!" she said again.

"I won't let you down!" she continued.

Her feet were bouncing off the ground.

"Thank you so so so so so much!!!" she said.

"Great!" said Julio.

"I can't wait to introduce you to the original cast," he said and swallowed hard.

The tension in his stomach returned.

"You are all going to be so awesome," he said.

"I can't believe it! WE'RE GOING TO BE IN SPACE MONSTERS!!!" said Zeek who would be the lead pilot.

"I can't wait to tell my mother!!!" screamed Derek who was in his twenties.

The other cast members just looked at him.

Listen Up!

The new and the old cast faced each other in the script room for the first read through of Monster of the Universe 11 - Complete Wipe Out!

Julio sat at the top of the table.

"LISTEN UP PEOPLE!" said Julio. "I want a happy cast and crew but none of you can leak this script. If you do I WILL DESTROY YOU!!"

He dressed up in a Galactic Monsters outfit and stood on the chair in front of the cast to terrify them completely.

"If a single story leaks to the press YOU WILL NEVER WORK IN THIS TOWN AGAIN!! EVEN YOUR FOOD STAMPS WILL BE WORTHLESS!"

He pointed mainly at the noob actors who looked terrified. Derek nearly wet himself he was in such complete terror.

The crusties who had starred in the ten other movies were completely ignoring Julio much to his annoyance.

They laughed and joked to each other.

Ryan showed the other Crusty crew his new private jet and they approved.

"ALSO NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR!!" said Julio dressed in the scariest Galactic Monster outfit seeking effect.

The terrified noobs all nodded and placed their cell phones in a basket.

Then the first read through began.

However a cell phone began to ring.

"WHOS PHONE IS THAT?! WHO THE HELL HAS A CELL PHONE!!" shouted Julio.

The ring tone song that played was Single Ladies by Beyonce.

Melanie just ignored Julio and took the call. "It's my therapist," explained Melanie. "You guys just start without me."

"Great ring tone," said Brett.

"You can't use it," replied Melanie and she left the room.

Ryan laughed and Brett made a face.

On the other side of the table, Noob Derek looked up at Julio and could have sworn that there was steam coming out of his ears.

Spaghetti Monsters

Brett walked into Julios office where he was going over the daily footage.

He seemed a little worked up.

"Hey Brett what's up?" asked Julio.

"I need a word to straighten something out," said Brett.

"Sure," said Julio.

"I overheard you saying to some of the noob actors that all we are making is a bug hunt movie in space and that this is just - " Brett placed his hands in the air in an annoyed fashion. Brett then raised his eyes. "I repeat, quote-on-quote just some kids movie!"

Brett sucked in his breath and his eyes blinked rapidly.

"This is NOT just some kids movie about a bug hunt. This movie is MORE than just a bug hunt! This movie has social and religious implication. Phil got that. He knew that. That's why the franchise was a success!!"

Julio scratched his head. "Hey all I meant was that the key demographic of this movie is..."

"DO NOT LECTURE ME WITH YOUR CORPORATE STUDIO TALK!!" said Brett angrily. "I am a higher order Knight in the Order of Spaghetti Monster Hunters. We have over one million members!! We have trained members to focus their minds to project thought in to the World Space and make the planet healthier. DO NOT LECTURE ME JULIO!!" He paused lifting his hand in the air like he was on set. "You know nothing of the power of this movie."

Julio nodded. "Sure I totally respect your Spaghetti Religion. I guess all I was saying was..."

However, Brett just strode over to Julio and placed his hands on his face. "SAY this is MORE than just some bug hunt for kids - OR I WALK!" said Brett.

Julios face was curled up and was barely able to talk.

"Whaaaaat?" asked Julio.

"I will leave this project and TELL THE WORLD YOU DO NOT GET WHAT SPACE MONSTERS IS REALLY ABOUT!"

Brett let go of Julio's face and looked like he was sulking.

He crossed his arms and dropped his head.

"I want to hear the words," sulked Brett.

"You're not the boss of me," said Julio and they had a Mexican Spaghetti Monster stand off.

They closed their eyes as they looked at one another.

"I'm going to call Phil and tell him how mean you were to me," said Brett.

"All right," said Julio, feeling a little sorry for him. "This movie is not just for kids. It's for everyone. I hope everyone goes to see it. And your Spaghetti Religion is great."

"Ok," said Brett considering the words. "Your response is adequate. I will hold off calling Phil - for the moment."

"Get outta here," said Julio and he went back to editing the movie.

"I'm glad we had this talk," said Brett.

He closed the door and then there was another knock.

"WHAT IS IT NOW?!" shouted Julio.

Melanie stood at the door smelling of incense sticks.

"Hey Melanie," said Julio. His shoulders slumped again.

"We need to talk!" she shouted.

Julio rubbed his head and tried to remain patient.

Melanie slammed the door and started to vent.

What's my Line?

Brett was doing a scene with Ryan.

"Yes, yes, move close up." Brett made a face knowing he had said the line wrong. "Let me go again."

He composed himself and tried again.

"Yes, yes, move closer. Lord Monster..."

Brett made another face.

Ryan started to lose patience.

"What's my line?" asked Brett.

Julio looked to the script supervisor who told him.

"Yes, yes. Lord is monster..."

Ryan finally lost his cool. "Looks like you have Spaghetti Monster lines..."

The cast and crew started to laugh.

"I'm tired of you making fun of my religion!" said Brett.

"What are you going to do about it?" asked Ryan.

Brett took a swing at him but Ryan ducked out of the way. "I'm going to knock your block off!"

Cast and crew watched on as Brett and Ryan started fighting on set.

They looked to Julio for guidance.

"Oh just keep rolling, we can put it in the making of the movie."

He got up and walked off for lunch.

The Stick

Julio arrived home to Isabella.

"How was your day?" she asked.

"I think Phil is stalking me," said Julio. "Everywhere I go he turns up. I was shooting a scene in a closed set and he was sitting up in the rafters. Later when I went to get some lunch, he was sitting right behind me..."

"Quiet," said Isabella.

"Why?" asked Julio.

"He's in the sitting room. They've been waiting for you," she explained.

"Who they?" asked Julio.

"The Producers Jerry, Jimmy and Jill. Phil too."

Julio started to panic. "Why are they here?" he asked.

"I don't know? Go and talk to them!!" said Isabella.

Reluctantly, Julio walked into the sitting room.

"Guys!" said Julio nervously. "To what do I owe the pleasure of this honour?"

"Please sit," said Jill.

"Is there some problem?"

"We're concerned," said Jill.

"But the dailies are great," said Julio. "Everyone says so!!"

"We're concerned about your Social Networking," said Jill. "We've been monitoring your embedded clicks and links pre launch and they are nothing like the competition."

"We've done the pre show launch. It was a big success. I don't understand," complained Julio.

"Don't worry I'm here to help," said Phil. "When I made the last successful ten movies, I realized that an inexperienced director like you would need some help so I have a solution," said Phil in his cool way. "Show him the device Jerry."

Jerry pulled the device out of his pocket.

Julio's eyes opened wide with surprise.

"You need one of these," said Jerry.

He handed it to Julio who extended it, wondering what it was. "What is it?"

He looked at it thinking it might be a Galactic Monsters prop and waved it in the air, making a Shoom noise.

Maybe they would place them in cereal packs, he thought.

Jill sighed unable to believe Julio did not know what it was. "It's a Selfie Stick god damit! All the cast and crew need to start using these IMMEDIATELY!"

She began to organize.

"Everyone GATHER TOGETHER!!" ordered Jill.

They did a practise Selfie.

Julio looked at Phil and looked really grumpy.

Phil and the producers were beaming smiles.

They took the picture of Julio's grumpy face and immediately shared it on the internet.

Barry

On another morning at work, Julio was sitting in the back of his limousine and slowed to enter the studio gates.

Once again, one of the former members of the original ten movies stood there and just stared into Julio's car.

It was Barry who had played a minor Galactic Monster Overlord in the seventh and eight movie but still remained popular.

However Julio had chosen not to cast him.

"Is he going to do that every day?" complained Julio.

They queued up as they went through the security check.

"I haven't cast him and THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT! THIS IS MY MOVIE!!" he insisted.

His personal assistant Lorie nodded.

"There's a social media campaign called Bring Back Barry!" replied Lorie.

"Really?" replied Julio. He began to sweat.

"Yes," she replied. "It has over five hundred thousand signatures."

"STOP THE CAR!!"

Bringing Back Barry

In the film lot, the crusties all gathered around Barry who was in his late seventies now and they were all celebrating his additional walk on, walk off scene in Galactic Monsters.

He had one line, "Great to see all you guys again!!" And then Barry walked off.

Everyone clapped and cheered.

Julio threw a small party for him in the lot and whispered to Lorie.

"Organize LOTS of Selfies!!"

Julio joined in a few.

In the distance, Julio saw Phil who clasped his hands together in a Zen Bhuddist way and bowed a little.

Julio checked out the internet for any other petitions.

"When do we start filming again?" asked the DP.

"We have to take some more Selfies. Later," said Julio.

The End